

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

for the
Southern District of Texas

United States Courts
Southern District of Texas

FILED

September 22, 2022

Nathan Ochsner, Clerk of Court

In the Matter of the Search of
(Briefly describe the property to be searched
or identify the person by name and address)

United States Postal Service Priority Mail Parcel: 9505
5163 0656 2263 8886 77

Case No. **4:22-mj-2289**

APPLICATION FOR A WARRANT BY TELEPHONE OR OTHER RELIABLE ELECTRONIC MEANS

I, a federal law enforcement officer or an attorney for the government, request a search warrant and state under penalty of perjury that I have reason to believe that on the following person or property (identify the person or describe the property to be searched and give its location):

United States Postal Service Priority Mail Parcel: 9505 5163 0656 2263 8886 77 currently located at 4600 Aldine Bender Rd., Houston, TX 77315

located in the Southern District of Texas, there is now concealed (identify the person or describe the property to be seized):

Controlled substances and/or proceeds

The basis for the search under Fed. R. Crim. P. 41(c) is (check one or more):

- ☒ evidence of a crime;
- ☒ contraband, fruits of crime, or other items illegally possessed;
- ☐ property designed for use, intended for use, or used in committing a crime;
- ☐ a person to be arrested or a person who is unlawfully restrained.

The search is related to a violation of:

Code Section	Offense Description
21 USC 841(a)(1)	Distribution of a controlled substance
21 USC 846	Conspiracy

The application is based on these facts:
(See Attached Affidavit)

- ☒ Continued on the attached sheet.
- ☐ Delayed notice of _____ days (give exact ending date if more than 30 days: _____) is requested under 18 U.S.C. § 3103a, the basis of which is set forth on the attached sheet.


Applicant's signature

Jonathan Ramirez U.S. Postal Inspector
Printed name and title

Attested to by the applicant in accordance with the requirements of Fed. R. Crim. P. 4.1 by
Telephone (specify reliable electronic means).

Date: September 22, 2022

City and state: Houston, Texas


Judge's signature

Christina A. Bryan, United States Magistrate Judge
Printed name and title

**UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
SOUTHERN DISTRICT OF TEXAS
HOUSTON DIVISION**

In the Matter of the Search of:	§	Case No. 4:22-mj-2289
	§	
United States Postal Service Priority Mail	§	
Parcel: 9505 5163 0656 2263 8886 77	§	
	§	

AFFIDAVIT IN SUPPORT OF SEARCH WARRANT

I, Jonathan Ramirez, being duly sworn, state the following:

1. I am a Postal Inspector with the United States Postal Inspection Service (“USPIS”) and have been so employed since June 2017. Prior to becoming a Postal Inspector, I served as a law enforcement officer with both the Orange County Sheriff’s Office and the Pasadena Police Department for a total of approximately five years. As part of my training as a Postal Inspector, I completed a 12-week training course in Potomac, Maryland, which included training in the investigation of drug trafficking using the mail. I am currently assigned to the USPIS Houston, Contraband Interdictions & Investigations team. I was previously assigned to USPIS Los Angeles Division Contraband Interdiction and Investigations team which had a Parcel Task Force, which was comprised of Postal Inspectors and Los Angeles Police Department (“LAPD”) officers and detectives. The Parcel Task Force was responsible for investigating the trafficking of drugs through the United States Mail. I have also completed a 40-hour LAPD narcotics school training course.

2. Since June 2017, I have participated in multiple investigations into violations of the Controlled Substances Act involving the United States Postal Service (“USPS”) and discussed

my investigations with other experienced law enforcement officers. For these reasons, I am familiar with how drug traffickers use the mail to facilitate their trafficking.

3. The facts set forth in this affidavit are based upon my personal observations, my training and experience, and information obtained from various law enforcement personnel and witnesses. This affidavit is intended to show merely that there is sufficient probable cause for the requested warrant and does not purport to set forth all my knowledge of or investigation into this matter. Unless specifically indicated otherwise, all conversations and statements described in this affidavit are related in substance and in part only.

4. Experience and drug trafficking intelligence information gathered by the USPIS have demonstrated that the U. S. Postal Service (“USPS”) Priority Express Mail and Priority Mail are frequently utilized by drug traffickers for shipping controlled substances or the proceeds of controlled substance sales or moneys furnished or intended to be furnished in exchange for controlled substances. Use of Priority Express Mail and Priority Mail are favored because of the speed (Express Mail - overnight; Priority mail - two-day delivery), reliability, free telephone and Internet package tracking services, as well as the perceived minimal chance of detection. Priority Express Mail and Priority Mail were originally intended for urgent, business to business, correspondence. Intelligence from prior packages, which were found to contain controlled substances, or the proceeds of controlled substance sales or moneys furnished or intended to be furnished in exchange for controlled substances, has indicated that these parcels are usually addressed from an individual to an individual. Priority Express Mail and Priority Mail are seldom used for individual-to-individual correspondence.

5. In an effort to combat the flow of controlled substances through the overnight delivery services, interdiction programs have been established in cities throughout the United States by the USPIS. These cities have been identified as known ‘sources’ of controlled

substances. The USPIS conducts an ongoing analysis of prior packages mailed through overnight delivery services, which were found to contain controlled substances or proceeds/payments of controlled substances sales. The analysis of prior packages, which were found to contain controlled substances, or the proceeds of controlled substance sales or moneys furnished or intended to be furnished in exchange for controlled substances, indicated that these parcels are usually sent from an individual to an individual. In the few cases when overnight delivery packages containing controlled substances, or the proceeds of controlled substance sales or moneys furnished or intended to be furnished in exchange for controlled substances, have displayed a business or company name, it has usually proven to be fictitious or used without the owner's knowledge and consent. Additionally, this analysis has established a series of characteristics which, when found in combination of two (2) or more, have shown a high probability that the package will contain a controlled substance, or the proceeds of controlled substance sales or moneys furnished or intended to be furnished in exchange for controlled substances. Information collected by the USPIS has demonstrated that the presence of these characteristics is significant for delivery services, to include USPS Priority Express Mail, Federal Express, and United Parcel Service. This profile includes, but is not limited to, the following characteristics: package mailed from or addressed to a narcotic source city; package has a fictitious return address; package addressee name is unknown at the destination address; package sender name is unknown at the return address; package has address information which is handwritten; package is mailed to or from a Commercial Mail Receiving Agency (CMRA); package is addressed from an individual to an individual; phone numbers listed on the package are not related to the listed parties or are not in service; packages are wrapped and/or heavily taped; frequency of the mailings is inconsistent with normal use absent a business relationship; and the ZIP Code from where the package is mailed is different than the ZIP Code used in the return address.

6. The USPS analysis of prior narcotics packages mailed through overnight delivery services has consistently shown that the identification of source cities has proven to be one of several reliable characteristics used in identifying suspect parcels. This analysis has also demonstrated that narcotics parcels originating from states other than source locations have been consistently found to contain designer drugs, such as Ecstasy, GBL, GHB, Anabolic Steroids, and other similar controlled substances. Generally, such designer drugs are not organic and are the product of a laboratory process.

7. This affidavit is made in support of an application for a federal search warrant to search USPS Priority Mail Parcel: 9505 5163 0656 2263 8886 77 (Subject Parcel) described more particularly as follows:

Subject Parcel:	Priority Mail Parcel: 9505 5163 0656 2263 8886 77
Sender:	SOG 2400 N. Forsyth Rd Unit 110 Orlando FL 32807
Addressee:	Third Coast 13428 Forest Trail Conroe Texas 77306
Size/Dimensions:	Brown Cardboard Box Approximately 12" x 8" x 10"
Postmarked:	September 20, 2022
Postmark Origin:	Winter Park, FL 32792
Postage Amount:	\$13.70
Weight:	2 lb. 13.60 oz

8. Prior investigations conducted by Postal Inspectors have identified Orlando, FL and Houston, Texas as both a destination area as well as a source area for controlled substances and/or the proceeds from the sale of controlled substances.

9. On or about September 22, 2022, Affiant observed the Subject Parcel while at the North Houston Processing and Distribution Center (“N HOU P&DC”). A review of the Subject Parcel noted that it bore several characteristics indicative of a parcel which likely contained a controlled substance or moneys furnished or intended to be furnished towards the purchase of controlled substances. The Subject Parcel had the following characteristics: it was mailed utilizing Priority Mail service from a known destination/source state (FL) to a known source/destination state (TX); is heavily taped; and has address information which is handwritten.

10. On or about September 22, 2022, Affiant conducted an open records query of the sender information listed on the Subject Parcel which revealed:

a. The listed sender address on the Subject Parcel “2400 N Forsyth Rd Unit 110, Orlando FL 32807” is a legitimate address but the sender “SOG” does not associate to the address. Affiant knows based upon his training and experience that narcotics traffickers often use fictitious addresses and names to conceal their true identities from law enforcement.

11. On or about September 22, 2022, Affiant conducted an open records query of the recipient information listed on the Subject Parcel which revealed

a. The listed address on Subject Parcel: “13428 Forest Trail, Conroe Texas 77306” is a valid delivery address but the recipient “Third Coast” does not associate to the address.

Affiant knows based upon his training and experience that narcotics traffickers often use fictitious addresses and names to conceal their true identities from law enforcement .

12. On or about September 22, 2022, Affiant obtained the assistance of Deputy A. Utley, a Canine Deputy (“K9”) with the Montgomery County Sheriff’s Office and certified handler of K9 “Rocco”. Deputy A. Utley and “Rocco” are certified as a team in the detection of controlled substances. Deputy A. Utley and “Rocco” received their certification through the National Narcotic Detector Dog Association (NNDDA). “Rocco” has numerous hours of training in the detection of controlled substances such as Marijuana, Cocaine, Methamphetamine, MDMA and Heroin. “Rocco” has successfully alerted on concealed controlled substances in numerous prior cases, which has led to the arrest of numerous suspects for drug law violations. “Rocco” was last certified in June 2022.

13. Upon Deputy A. Utley’s arrival, “Rocco” was allowed to examine the Subject Parcel along with three (3) “dummy” boxes (boxes containing no suspected controlled substances, in fact empty boxes) on the floor in different locations known not to be contaminated with the odor of controlled substances. “Rocco” conducted an exterior examination of the Subject Parcel and “dummy” boxes. Deputy A. Utley advised that “Rocco” indicated a positive alert to the presence of a controlled substance scent coming from within the Subject Parcel.

14. Based on the facts set forth above, there is probable cause to believe the Subject Parcel contains one or more controlled substances, drug paraphernalia, proceeds of controlled substance sales or moneys furnished or intended to be furnished in exchange for controlled substances, and material relating to the distribution of same. In the past, all the above factors have been indicative of packages which contained illegal controlled substances, or the proceeds of

controlled substance sales or moneys furnished or intended to be furnished in exchange for controlled substances.

15. The Subject Parcel is currently in the custody of your Affiant. Affiant, therefore, seeks the issuance of a search warrant for the search of the Subject Parcel for any such controlled substance, proceeds/funds for controlled substances or evidence, fruits of crime, and instrumentalities, in violation of Title 21, United States Code, Sections 841(a)(1), and 846.


Jonathan Ramirez
U. S. Postal Inspector

Subscribed and sworn to me by telephone at Houston, Texas, on this 22 day of September 2022 and I find probable cause.


HON. CHRISTINA A. BRYAN
UNITED STATES MAGISTRATE JUDGE